

THE REMNANT AND THE MASSES

By

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“My sheep hear my voice.” (John 10:27)

Although the Bible teaches that only a remnant will be saved, modern evangelism is designed to appeal to the **masses**, so that the mainstream church has come to reflect not the mind of Christ, but the mind of the masses.

In his book, *Free Speech and Plain Language*, Albert Jay Nock wrote, “The mass-man is one who has neither the force of intellect to apprehend the principles issuing in what we know as the human life, nor the force of character to adhere to those principles steadily and strictly as laws of conduct; and because such people make up the great, the overwhelming majority of mankind, they are called collectively **the masses**...The Remnant are those who by force of intellect are able to apprehend these principles, and by force of character are able, at least measurably, to cleave to them.”¹

Contrary to popular thought, Jesus did not appeal to the masses. At first they flocked to him by the thousands, but when they got an inkling of what He was really after, they deserted Him in droves. In the long run, what He said in the Sermon on the Mount was proven true, that the masses travel the broad road to destruction, while only a few travel the narrow way that leads to life.²

The church which sets out to attract a large membership makes its appeal to the masses. This means that it must accommodate its message to the popular mind, which is the reason you may hear religious words set to the tempo of uncivilized rhythm called “rock” and find the meaningful hymns being omitted in favor of repeating the same phrase over and over to a childish tune. Whatever appeals to the mass-mind is used as bait, from entertainers of show business to the stars of the sports industry. The requirements for discipleship are trimmed to attract the greatest number with the least change from carnal to spiritual aspirations. In the words of Nock, the result is that “the prophetic message is so heavily adulterated with trivialities, in every instance, that its effect on the masses is merely to harden them in their sins. Meanwhile, the Remnant turn their backs on the prophet...” Such a “prophet” may be popular, but not with the Remnant.

In the time of Noah, the masses almost had it all going their way in a world of violence and wickedness.³ But instead of appealing to the masses, God aimed His message at the one man who had intelligence and integrity to resist the tide of evil. Noah heard His voice and acted with sterling qualities of character, to the saving of a remnant, a total of only eight souls.

At Babel the masses united. No doubt their leaders thought this was the ultimate in progress, perhaps for them a New World Order. Such unity must have had the approval of the religions embraced by the mass-mind. They said, “...Let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth,”⁴ which is to say, “Let us deny God’s authority, make our own code, and unite as one mind in order to overpower the mind of God in heaven.” God defeated their rebellion simply by dividing them into

separate languages, so they could not communicate their idolatrous and rebellious thoughts.

The attempt today is to destroy this God-made barrier. By the press and television an idea born in one corner of the globe becomes the desire of millions all over the world within hours. More than ever men insist that unity and equality mark human progress. Church leaders waste no time in learning what the mass-mind wants and then shaping their message to appeal to the masses.

It is a common mistake to think that Jesus made his appeal to the illiterate, to the skid-row bum, and to the majority. The fact is that Christ made His greatest efforts to the other-than-ordinary people. One of His greatest appeals was to Nicodemus,⁵ a man of high intelligence and power, a ruler in Israel who sought Jesus out to hear His message. At the well at Sychar, Jesus discussed profound issues with an exceptional woman, a woman who was sinful but by no means one who drifted along with the masses.⁶ It was Judas, the betrayer, who wanted to appeal to the masses by selling Mary's gift of perfume and distributing the money to the poor.⁷

In the parable of the sower, Jesus explained that the seed (the word) is sown everywhere, but it is not suited to all soils.⁸ Only the fertile soul, the person who has a mind to receive the demanding word of Christ, is actually proper ground for that seed. The seed does not accommodate itself to the mass-mind.

The message of Christ does not need to be adjusted to the mass-mind, as is so often done. Instead, the truth is to be sown everywhere, so that the fertile mind may perceive that it is, indeed, the unique message of Christ, and wherever that happens that person will arise to receive the implanted word⁹ and will hunger and thirst for more of it¹⁰ until it brings forth the fruit of a new creature,¹¹ not fashioned after the world but transformed by the renewing of the mind.¹²

No doubt many who appeal to the mass-mind are motivated by good intentions. The idea is to draw people to Christ by making Him attractive to the masses, those who are brain-washed by propaganda, saturated with trivia and rendered incapable of discipline or true repentance. The method is to make the message appealing to those who follow the crowd, who stay in style, who know the "in thing" and who are "with it." But the method of Jesus was to "draw all men" to Himself by being "lifted up," not lifted up by praise and honor among the masses, but the lifting up on a cross, the most shameful spectacle the world knew.¹³

The Remnant is not the sweetheart of the Rotary Club, but the bride of Christ. Its aim is not the winning of a popularity contest, but the approval of God. Therefore the Christian message must always be aimed at those individuals in the world who have the heart and the mind to grasp the unique purpose of God as revealed through His Son, Jesus.

The gospel is not for everybody. If that sounds shocking, note what Jesus said: "He that is of God hears the words of God: for this cause you hear them not, because you are not of God."¹⁴ Only those who hunger and thirst after righteousness have any hope of being filled.¹⁵ The masses do not meet these qualifications but are attuned to the degenerate message of TV and hunger and thirst for time and money for pleasure.

Still, the gospel is to be preached to all the world. Here and there it will fall on the ears of one who is seeking a way out of the mass-mind swamp, and when he hears the sound of truth, no matter how softly, he will rise to grasp it and eagerly make it his own.

Elijah thought he was the only believer left, but God informed him that there were still 7,000 “who had not bowed their knees to Baal.”¹⁶ They formed no great “not for profit” organizations and launched no campaigns, but the Remnant was there, each looking individually to God alone and resisting the mass-mind, each not knowing but what he was the only one and yet each one known by God.

The voice in the wilderness is never popular and is never heeded by the masses. John the Baptist did not live to enjoy mass approval and was a failure in their eyes, but among those who heard his message were people looking for Christ and hence were ready when He came.

The Christian message must not be aimed at the masses but rather preached among the masses and aimed at the potential Christian among them who is looking for directions from God.

A true witness is quite unconcerned with what his audience wants to hear. He is altogether concerned that he tells the truth. The Christian witness must declare the message of Christ which calls for repentance and commitment to a kingdom which is not of this world. Generally it will fall on deaf ears and cannot be expected to evoke praise from any who are in the religious mainstream. But Christ’s sheep, the remnant, will hear. Without fanfare and notoriety for the witness, the truth will be believed, the seed will grow and produce fruit unto eternal life.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

REFERENCES

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